

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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R 011745Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4037

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

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EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT NU

SUBJECT: ELECTIONS 1974: LIBERAL PARTY CONVENTION NOMINATES GENERAL SOMOZA

REF: MANAGUA'S A-05 DATED 1/24/74

1. MEETING IN LEON APRIL 28 THE NATIONAL LIBERAL PARTY (PLN) UNANIMOUSLY SELECTED GENERAL ANASTASIO SOMOZA DEBAYLE AS ITS CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT IN THE SEPTEMBER 1974 ELECTIONS. GENERAL SOMOZA WAS UNOPPOSED. IN A LENGTHY, PROMISE-FILLED ACCEPTANCE SPEECH WHICH INCLUDED SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE, SOMOZA PLEDGED THAT HE WOULD LEAD HIS PARTY TO VICTORY. PRESENT FOR SOMOSA'S ACCEPTANCE OF THE NOMINATION WAS HIS WIFE, HOPE WHOSE ABSENCE FROM PUBLIC FUNCTIONS FOR MANY MONTHS HAS PROVOKED CONSIDERABLE SPECULATION.

2. IN A BUSINESS SESSION APRIL 27 THE PLN CONVENTION UNANIMOUSLY
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APPROVED A RECOMMENDATION OF ITS NATIONAL COMMITTEE EXPELLING TWELVE

DISSIDENT LIBERALS, NINE OF WHOM WERE CONVENTION DELEGATES, FROM THE PARTY. NONE OF THE DISSIDENTS, WHO HAVE ALL VIGOROUSLY OPPOSED GENERAL SOMOZA'S CONTINUANCE IN POWER, WERE PRESENT AT THE CONVENTION. FOREMOST AMONG THOSE EXPELLED WAS RAMIRO SACASA GUERRERO, WHO FROM 1950 TO 1969 HAD SERVED THE ADMINISTRATIONS OF GENERAL SOMOZA GARCIA, LUIS SOMOZA, RENE SCHICK, LORENZO GUERRERO AND GENERAL SOMOZA DEBAYLE AS VICE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, MINISTER OF LABOR, SECRETARY TO THE PRESIDENCY, MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF EDUCATION. OTHER PROMINENT LIBERALS EXPELLED WERE PEDRO J. QUINTANILLA FORMER SECRETARY

TO THE PRESIDENCY, VICE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, VICE MINISTER OF LABOR AND MEMBER OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES; ORLANDO TREJOS SOMMARIBA FORMER MINISTER OF LABOR AND MEMBER OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES; FRANCISCO LAINEZ, FORMER GENERAL MANAGER OF THE NATIONAL BANK AND PRESIDENT OF THE CENTRAL BANK; AND ALEJANDRO ABAUNZA ESPINOZA FORMER DEPUTY, SENATOR, MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE.

3. COMMENT: WITH THIS PURGE OF PROMINENT LIBERAL FIGURES ASSOCIATED WITH HIS PREDECESSORS IN THE PRESIDENCY, GENERAL SOMOZA DEBAYLE HAS ELIMINATED ALL OPEN OPPOSITION WITHIN THE PLN AND COMPLETES ITS CONVERSION INTO HIS OWN PERSONAL PARTY. END COMMENT.

4. THE ONLY OTHER NOTEWORTHY OCCURRENCE ON THE 27TH WAS A SPIRITED FLOOR FIGHT OVER THE JINOTEGA SEAT ON THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE BETWEEN THE INCUMBENT DEPUTY DAVID ZAMORA AND FRANCISCO CHAVARRIA, CURRENTLY GENERAL MANAGER OF THE NATIONAL COFFEE INSTITUTE (INCAFE). ZAMORA WON BY THE LOPSIDED MARGIN OF 190 TO 30 DESPITE HIS OPPONENT'S CHARGES THAT HE WAS SYMPATHETIC TO THE RAMIRO SACASA FACTION. ELECTIONS FOR THE OTHER 63 PARTY POSITIONS FILLED BY THE CONVENTION WERE UNANIMOUS SINCE THE CANDIDATES WERE UNOPPOSED. SHELTON

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